Book Reviews and Journal Notes


Here one finds a direct approach to the bibliographic methods and sources which make it possible to use a medical library intelligently. The introduction and simple explanation of the general arrangement of a medical library orient the reader to his surroundings. He is then introduced to the chief bibliographic sources: periodical indexes, the outstanding library catalogs, abstracting journals, monographic review series, and famous subject bibliographies of the 18th and 19th centuries. A chapter on the advantages of interloans is followed by one on ways and means of compiling medical bibliographies. Additional information on the library card catalog, the development of medical periodicals, abstracting services, and the medical libraries in Great Britain rounds out this compact little guide. Written for the British user, it will serve, equally well, any one interested in medical bibliography research.

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The annual report of our National Medical Library is always awaited with interest and even friendly concern by the many, both here and abroad, who look to this Library for help of many kinds and who know something of the difficulties under which it operates. These include, as is well known, wretchedly inadequate housing and a number of the commoner ills that governmental flesh is proverbially heir to.

Though the housing problem, in its fundamental aspects, remains one urgently needing legislative action, basically as a matter of protection of a priceless national asset, it is encouraging to note that, in the year under review, some amelioration of working conditions was obtained through staff ingenuity and coöperation, and through the coöperation of other governmental services. Despite this, there is still, evidently and unfortunately, insufficient reason for retiring the "bucket brigade" to inactive status.

This report follows its immediate predecessors in assigning separate chapters to the various Divisions of the Library: Acquisitions; Catalog; Reference Services; History of Medicine; Current List of Medical Literature; Index-Catalogue; Administrative. Though anonymity rules, the Division Heads appear to be speaking in their respective voices—always with a warm sense of teamplay, but occasionally with something in the nature of staff-meeting candor. It becomes